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A shot at winter

Ryan Vandenberg, from left, and teammate Zoe Preston battle Peter Bowers for a loose puck with Blake Paton looking on during a hockey game out on Kashagawigamog Lake on Saturday, Jan. 22. With last week's snowstorm and consistent sub-zero temperatures, the Highlands is looking ready for all the winter activities the area is known to offer. /DARREN LUM Staff



Wetlands are essential to more than just turtles

DARREN LUM

Editor

Protesters were out this past week on Gelert Road, trying to raise the public's awareness about the potential death of turtles and destruction of a portion of a wetland as response to a Haliburton resident's actions on his property located

across from J. Douglas Hodgson Elementary School.

The protest started shortly after the fill was added on Friday and included members of the public and Turtle Guardians, who advocates for turtles and their habitats, which includes in the field efforts from monitoring turtle movements and helping them across the road during spring and educating the public with out-

reach efforts.

Those people that came out to Gelert Road were there to not only defend the wetland, which is in an Environmental Protected zone based upon the Dysart et al planning map, Haliburton Village area schedule "A" map one, as of July 2021, but to also raise awareness of the lack of municipal enforcement to protect this wetland with threatened species

protected under the Endangered Species Act. The wetland is a potential wintering spot for turtles, including Grace the 125-plus year snapping turtle, a species at according to the Guardians. This protest was also a call out about how all wetland locations are threatened throughout Haliburton County because of the lack of site-alteration bylaws.

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Mayor Roberts: Implementing site-altercation bylaw is complicated

from page 1

Turtle Guardians chief operating officer and founder Leora Berman was angered when she saw the work to fill in what she said was the main water basin in the wetland by Gelert Road on Friday, Jan. 14.

She said the municipality of Dysart et al should be taking responsibility for what happened and similar incidents.

"The recent Auditor General report showed the Ford government has not protected our endangered wildlife, yet the Minister [of Environment] has contacted us and is investigating the situation. Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) are investigating too. It isn't because of Grace and it isn't because this site regulates flooding of Gelert Road either. It is only because of fish and threatened species at the site. So, where is Dysart et al? They say it's not their jurisdiction but they are wrong. Their job was to regulate," she wrote in a prepared statement.

The Turtle Guardians hoped to have the fill removed to allow turtles to be safely removed. The DFO's involvement was because the wetland is part of fish habitat that's protected under the Fisheries Act.

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts said she sympathizes with the protesters and appreciates their passion, but without a site-alteration bylaw the township has its hands tied.

"It doesn't mean we don't care. It doesn't mean that we haven't taken action as quickly as we have been able to by adding it to an agenda [for Tuesday's, Jan. 25 regular meeting], having the conversation being what can we do about it?" she said. "It's great that it stopped for now so that we can at least have a pause and we can, you know, maybe go forward."

Berman said just because the municipality doesn't have a site-alteration bylaw isn't an excuse for what has transpired, which has ramifications that go beyond just saving turtles.

"So, it is the gaping holes in the tools and processes within our own municipality that led to this situation in the first place ... and could lead to many more. If this isn't fixed, our hunting heritage, fishing, and wildlife are at stake. The proper tools are non-existent here, and that takes power away from the people and puts it in the hands of developers alone," she wrote. "This zoning at this site was placed only on a tiny fraction of the 14 -acre property. So in this case, and in any case, it doesn't mean that its an either/or situation and it rarely means that it is all or nothing. The lack of good tools, simply removes opportunities for the people of this community to find balanced solutions."

Roberts said establishing a site-alteration bylaw is complicated, as has been proven at the county level with the most recent meeting held virtually on Monday, Jan. 17. It's something the county has been at it since 2017.

She said the shoreline allowance bylaw is not likely going to be passed by the county any time soon.

"We're so, so far divided in that. Near the end of that conversation, my closing remarks were I don't think we should go back to the drawing board. I honestly don't think that we're going to get a bylaw ... it's not just that people don't agree on. Even if we have something that gets presented to county council and it's voted on and passed, we know that we're going to have that being contested. It's the most divisive topic I've ever seen," she said.

She said she will contact Haliburton County's director of public works and planning to ask about the potential problem if someone raises an area to a degree



Highlands residents Bonnie Roe, from left, and husband Greg hold signs while standing on Gelert Road across from J. Douglas Hodgson Elementary School during a protest to not just bring attention to a wetland that was being filled in by a resident on their property, but raise awareness about preserving all wetlands in Haliburton County on Wednesday, Jan. 19 in Haliburton. The Ministry of Environment has become involved and said the resident has stopped filling the wetland, which is zoned Environmentally Protected. They are currently investigating. The Municipality of Dysart et al has added this issue to the council meeting for today, Jan. 15, held virtually. /DARREN LUM Staff

where it may negatively affect water drainage.

Roberts said protesters and concerned residents may not like the position Dysart is taking, but said council will be discussing the matter at the regular council meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 25.

"But we got it on our agenda as quickly as we can to see what we can do and that's pretty good in my mind and that the ministry did respond as quickly as they have. That's great, too. So, I would like to hear on the flip side from county and I'll be contacting them before Tuesday's meeting," she said. "So, I'll hopefully have an answer"

Roberts acknowledged the wetland that sparked the protest has had flooding in that area of the road close to the wetland before.

Although the resident that filled in the wetland didn't require a permit, Roberts said, he did conduct work at a time of year when it is difficult to see where you are in relation to the different types of land. "But it is also very different to be doing something like that in the middle of winter where you can't actually see or delineate where ... [there is a pond] ... you have to look at maps," she said.

She added there is a responsibility property owners must assume to not alter property to negatively impact a neighbouring property even in areas without a wetland. In this case, it's the county road and "they'll have to weigh in on this one as well."

Contacted for comment, a woman who did not identify herself at the property where the fill was added, said, "no comment."

Minister of the Environment David Piccini press secretary Andrew Kennedy confirmed they had contacted the Turtle Guardians, a second complainant and the Haliburton property owner with the wetland at issue.

"We are happy to share that the property owner has agreed to stop the filling activities while we investigate further," he wrote in an email.

Since the initial response to the *Echo*, when asked to clarify if any charges and what the investigation would entail, the office responded: "Our objective is ensure that no species have been harmed from this incident, which is why investigators from the Ministry of the Environment,

Conservation and Park's (MECP) Species at Risk Branch and Environmental Investigations and Enforcement Branch are working as quickly as possible to complete an investigation into how and why this event occurred, along with possible solutions for remediation. Of course, MECP hopes that the habitat will be restored as soon as possible."

This concern isn't just relegated to local residents and organizations such as the Turtle Guardians. A petition was started online at Change.org called The Help Save Grace the Ancient Turtle and her friends, by ending the filling of wetlands!

As of Monday, Jan. 24, there has been 2,042 signatures in a little more than a week of starting. It is directed at the MECP, Haliburton County and Dysart et al.

Full time resident Sandre Daoust, who lives a short drive down the road on Grass Lake in Haliburton, said she was there last week to help raise awareness about the importance of all wetlands.

"We're in a vast wetlands area, you know? All through Haliburton and the village and the filling in that has gone on, unmonitored really, is really creating bigger and bigger problems," she said, referring to past flooding of the road. Daoust said there are municipalities outside of the Highlands that has site-alteration bylaws in place.

"So it's not about what 's happened. I think it's about what we have to stop now and what we need to do moving forward ... if the wetlands are not left to do what they need to do, especially in our lake chains it's going to be almost irreversible. It's practically there now," she said.

Daoust has lived full-time almost 20 years on Grass Lake, but has been a cottager for close to 40 years in Haliburton County. She has seen the destruction of various wetlands in the Highlands and is working to stop it. She isn't alone as an active member of the Friends of Grass Lake group. For close to 10 years, the group existed unofficially and has been advocating for the preservation of wetlands and shoreline on Grass Lake. This past year the environmental conservation organization launched a website and a newsletter that it is sent to 85 residences, Daoust said.

She referenced how Head Lake is at the end of a chain of lakes, so what happens

in one place isn't isolated. Wetlands are not just habitats for wildlife, but also provide help with storm water management and act as a natural filter by trapping sediments and excess nutrients from surface water run-off before it reaches open water helping to maintain water quality.

It's more than just for the one-eyed snapping turtle, Grace, she said. It's the big picture of preserving the wetlands, but also the residual adverse issues that come from its destruction. "I would imagine being a councillor could be quite uncomfortable these days because people are informed and they are asking questions and saying, you know, you can't do this. You can't support this, and you got to make it change. So that was just my opportunity to be in some way able to join others who are just trying to raise consciousness," she said.

Although Daoust went out the one day, she had also contacted people she knew to join the protest, which had a rotation of groups throughout the past week.

"If not me, who? If not now, when?" Daoust said.

Once she learned of how this issue will be brought up in a staff report added to the Dysart et al regular meeting's agenda, she encouraged people to write letters to express concern to council about the wetland destruction. She said there are close to 30 letters attached to the agenda.

The mayor defends the municipality

Roberts, who has been on council for close to 16 years, said a request to have a site-alteration bylaw wasn't ever brought up by council, staff or the public.

"It just hasn't come up in the conversation until it's been [discussed] at the county. These last several years we delegated that authority for site-alteration on the shoreline to the county. That's where they [came up with] should this be any wetland bodies of water? And it would if we had agreed to add those things then this land in question on County Road 1 would fall under that jurisdiction," she said. "Then that person would have had to apply for a permit."

"You can see if Dysart goes down this road how complicated it's been at the county [level] and we're still aren't there to pass it," she said.

Councillors seek clarification in shoreline bylaw

NICK BERNARD

Staff Reporter

Councillors held a line-by-line review of the much-discussed draft shoreline preservation bylaw in a special meeting of county council on Jan. 17. The bylaw, which has been in the works since 2017, was reviewed in a presentation by consultants from Hutchinson Environmental Services, and J.L. Richards & Associates in October.

While the five-hour meeting resulted in a large number of items for the consultants, it was agreed that another special meeting would be arranged to discuss the draft bylaw within the next three months.

"I think as we've gone through the document, we've clarified where there needs to be additions or clarifications, or a few more details added, and we look forward to those things being brought back to us for review," said Algonquin Highlands Mayor Carol Moffatt. She emphasized throughout the meeting that the language of the bylaw must meet its intent.

At the outset of the meeting, Algonquin Highlands Deputy Mayor and County Warden Liz Danielsen characterized her experience with the process, saying that educating the public will be important.

"Whether we pass this bylaw over the next few weeks, or months, or not, I think we've all heard loud and clear that we need to put some effort into education, as it's clear that many taxpayers still don't understand the full intent of the bylaw, its contents, what will require a permit or not, or that what is already in place is protected," she said, expressing the spectrum of concerns that council has heard throughout the process. "This isn't about little projects ... it's about extensive excavation, blasting, clear cutting, and massive earthworks and significant changes to the waterfront."

Throughout the meeting, councillors made numerous suggestions, including a significant number of additions to the list of definitions.

"I am going to be picky on language around the draft, because I think there's some language that is, the intent is sound, but the interpretation could cause problems," said Moffatt.

The first major discussion took place around the area of application for the bylaw, including the much-discussed 30-metre buffer zone that is defined as a protected shoreline.

"What we're suggesting, in summary, is that the bylaw apply to the 30-metre shoreline preservation zone, as well as natural features within the county where the county may wish to exercise some level of oversight around how development occurs in and adjacent to those natural features," explained Jason Ferrigan, consultant and senior planner at J.L. Richards & Associates.

Brent Parsons, senior aquatic scientist with Hutchinson Environmental Services, said that the 30-metre zone was a standard established by the province.

"They provide that guidance through the National Heritage Reference Manual," he said, referring to a report authored by Ontario's Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry. Parsons also pointed out that the buffer zone is also recommended by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, and a variety of other policies including The Green Belt Plan and the Lake

Simcoe Protection Plan.

Dysart Deputy Mayor Pat Kennedy further questioned how the thirty meter figure was settled upon.

"Everything I've read so far, it depends a lot on ... the slope, on what the ground cover actually is," he said. "Quebec uses 15 meters, based on different things with slope, vegetation. Nobody I've seen has used the blanketed 30-metres for 600 lakes that covers everything from Elephant Lake to the east side part of our county, with an average depth of seven feet ... almost half a kilometre of a road running right alongside a shoreline, to Kawagama Lake, which is hemlock, pine, and Canadian Shield. I'm trying to really get my head wrapped around why we're using the one-size-fits-all application here."

Danielsen acknowledged that Kennedy's concern was one heard by all councillors.

"My issue with that is how manageable [it is] trying to look at 600 different lakes and the different characteristics of them," she said. "When and if we land on a document that we can all agree on, it's going to be, I think, challenging to manage for some time ... to try and break things out and deal with different lakes and different circumstances and different soil types, and different rules for each one, to me, is just beyond our ability, especially to start with, to manage."

Dysart Mayor Andrea Roberts acknowledged that Kennedy was making some key points, but pointed to the existing shoreline tree preservation bylaw, which also defines its shorelines as 30-metre distances.

"I'm still a proponent of the 30-metre setbacks," she said, listing off a number of existing instances of the 30-metre distance. "Our official plans all talk about 30-metre setbacks, all new lots created are 30 metres, septic have to be back."

The topic of ponds was also discussed. According to Ferrigan, ponds were a recent inclusion within the scope of natural features protected by the bylaw, and with an exact definition to be included in future versions of the bylaw.

"I think from our past discussions with council, we had included ponds based on feedback around unintended consequences of the bylaw ... the nature of the conversation at the time was that if the shoreline preservation provisions apply to a lake, river, and stream, that may have the unintended consequence of providing an incentive to develop on ponds," he said. "So, in this particular case, my initial reaction ... is that it applies to natural ponds and not man-made ponds. However, that's subject to discussion and direction from county council."

Minden's Deputy Mayor Lisa Schell responded to that by offering the example of people without ponds on their properties, who suddenly find themselves with ponds created by features like beaver dams.

Highlands East Deputy Mayor Cec Ryall offered another example of a resident who built an artesian well, and created a pond to collect the overflow, going so far as to add natural features like lilypads.

"Those are the kind of greys that have come up in discussions that I've had, because I have two people that actually have that situation," Ryall said.

Permitting was also a topic that weaved throughout the meeting. As it stands, council is faced with a decision whether to implement a permit system, or continuing its existing practice of not requiring permits for work within the 30-metre zone.

“

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— Jason Ferrigan, consultant and senior planner, J.L. Richards & Associates

Roberts voiced her thoughts on the matter by expressing what she felt was a shift in the way the bylaw was discussed.

"Where this, to me, has gone a little off the rails, is that it's switched [from] a shoreline preservation bylaw to a site alteration bylaw, which is requiring a permit for absolutely anything within that area," she said. "That's where I'm hearing complaints, that's where I think we're going to get bogged down."

Moffatt characterized the existing voluntary system as an honour system that relies on submitted complaints to weed out bad actors who intend on contravening the bylaw.

Another question Moffatt raised was the use of pesticides and fertilizers, as some properties have lawns that impede the 30-metre rule.

"We can't stand here and stamp our feet about lawns to the lake being ... one of the biggest contributors to poor lake health, and then not committing to do something about them," she said. "There are two sides to this argument. On one side of this debate are a whole bunch of people who are asking us to do something about pesticides, fertilizers, and lawns. So, I'm not saying cement shoes for lawns, but that needs to be part of the education program ... I think we just need to do something about it."

On the topic of contraventions, Minden Mayor Brent Devolin said he hopes those who do contravene the bylaw face stiff fines.

"I'm on the record as wanting as big a fine for contravention of the existing bylaw that we have, and I wouldn't have spent the last two years of my time if I wasn't looking for steel-toed boots to deal with these issues," he said.

The full 897-page report on the existing draft bylaw is available to view on the County of Haliburton's website.

The full discussion from the Jan. 17 meeting is available to view on the county's YouTube channel.

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Highlands East expecting a 3.8 per cent tax hike

CHRIS DROST

Staff Reporter

Residents of Highlands East will have to dig a little deeper as property taxes are expected to increase by 3.8 per cent in 2022, largely because of higher insurance costs.

This translates to \$19.50 per \$100,000 of assessment, or about \$80 for a \$400,000 residential property.

A one per cent increase in residential taxes is equal to \$65,990 in taxation.

The rise in insurance costs across all departments was cited as the major reason for the tax hike. "Insurance has gone up eight per cent overall," CAO/treasurer, Shannon Hunter said.

During the special meeting of council on Jan. 18, each of the department heads or their representatives, had an opportunity to present their budgets to council.

Fire chief Chris Baughman explained the need for an increase to the fire services budget because of higher insurance costs and higher costs of benefits for volunteers. Efforts are being made to bring wages for firefighters up to at least minimum wage.

"Supplies have not had much change and everything else is relatively unchanged from previous years," he said.

Laurie Devolin, CBO and bylaw enforcement officer, explained that there has not been much change in the building department budget from last year other than some small increases in the fuel and insurance costs. She has increased the mileage for students this year. The GMC Terrain will be replaced for the bylaw department.

Under Bylaw and Enforcement, Hunter said that 2021 was a very busy year.

"COVID-19 has added a lot of extra workloads on this department," she said. The budget will be similar to previous years but they will be putting emphasis on building bylaw clean-up. Anything going through the court system will probably be lagged due to backlog but non-compliance is growing.

Brett Charboneau, operations supervisor, reported that Public Works will be carrying over some road work that was not completed in 2021. This includes adding surface treatment on West Eels Rd., work on the Earls Bridge and adding a second layer of surface treatment on the Dyno

Road.

Charboneau has increased the budget for training as they have not had much in the past. This will allow training through Good Roads. There will also be funds set aside for road patrol software that will help bring them into compliance. A budget line has also been added for PPE for staff for such things as safety hats, boot, chain-saw pants etc.

Capital projects planned for 2022 include: Upper Paudash; Labrador to Hwy 28; Gem Rd and Inlet Bay Rd. In addition, the South Wilberforce bridge will be completed and various repairs completed on automatic doors and roofs.

"I really support additional training. Maybe overdo it a bit," Councillor Cam McKenzie said.

Under the Waste Management budget, Charboneau said that things will remain pretty much the same as the previous year. "I have added in a bit extra for staff training," he said. The land fill and equipment budgets remain the same.

Megan Lockwood, environmental supervisor, reported that there have been some increases in the Environmental budget, largely because the cost of the environmental supervisor and technician being moved under their budget. As seen in other departments, insurance costs have gone up along with the cost of filters needed for Ward One. A new truck will be purchased using reserves from 2021.

While not a great deal has changed in the Parks/Recreation Programs and Facilities budget, Jim Alden, property supervisor explained that the biggest thing has been the increase in insurance. "I have also added a line for fuel," he said. There are also line items for staff training. Supply costs have remained about the same.

The cost of trail upgrades has increased a bit, according to Alden.

Capital projects for the year include: Cardiff pool change room; Herlihey Park; the Highland Grove Community Centre fridge, new windows and refurbishing of the basketball court and the electrical panel at the Cardiff Community Centre. The library costs remain about the same as last year other than increased insurance costs.

Hunter reported that the planning department has experienced a great deal of activity in the past year. The township hired a junior planner in 2021 and this has prompted the need to increase the budget to include funds for further training for this person, as well as some office furniture and equipment.

Because the planning department is expecting another busy year this year, Hunter said that an extra \$30,000 has been brought in from 2021 reserves to help cover the added costs. They need to do an Official Plan review and a Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw review in 2022, which will increase costs.

Economic development coordinator Joanne Vanier, explained that \$6,000 has been set aside in the economic development department budget for mineral claims. They are looking to obtain a lease on two claims. They also need to work on the railway claim.

The economic development budget includes 1,040 hours for the economic development coordinator as well as having a student for 36 hours per week for 16 weeks.

Under the advertising budget, Vanier noted that

a number of things were not printed last year due to COVID-19. She has included funds in this year's budget for the Highlander Handbook, GeoWoodstock event in B.C., the Welcome to Haliburton ad, Explore map ad and registration and mileage for participating in the Bancroft Gemboree.

"I don't see the value [of the GeoWoodstock event] in these times," said Mayor Dave Burton. He suggested putting it towards a start-up fund for non-profits to apply for funding.

"The GeoWoodstock event in B.C. was approved in 2020," said Councillor Suzanne Partridge to which Mayor Burton replied, "I believe we cancelled it. I am not even sure if we will be travelling by then."

Hunter suggested that the \$3,000 that was for the GeoWoodstock, could instead be earmarked for start-up funding for non-profit groups. "I support that," Councillor McKenzie said. He noted that some groups have been "in limbo for two years."

The geocaching budget includes funds for registration for Groundspeak GeoTour, cache maintenance and mileage, information centre and supplies. The Trails Committee has more members than any other municipal committee and so the per diem amount has been increased.

Under recreation and culture, funds have been set aside for beautification and for Canada Day celebrations.

The administration budget showed that there has been an increase in OMPF funding, now at \$2,000,100. Hunter explained that the funds they have received, that were from the Gas Tax, "have not been allocated in 2022 as we are doing projects for which funds had already been put aside." She recommended that they be moved to the 2023 budget.

Hunter also reported that the increase in remuneration through the union has increased by 1.75 per cent for 2022. Benefits have increased as well but she did not have the percentage in front of her.

Most operational costs were up and down as 2021 was not a regular year. "There was not much travelling and so we have seen savings that way," said Hunter.

Money is also being set aside for an Integrity Commissioner, just in case one is needed in future.

Overall, there were more annual licenses to pay for towards software and the EV charging station.

Funds are also being earmarked towards upcoming municipal election expenses, including an election returning officer.

The policing costs for the township will see a decrease in 2022, although costs are still over \$1 million per year, according to Hunter.

Following the presentations to council, Hunter expressed her hope that sufficient information has been provided so that all members feel comfortable. She encouraged any members of council with questions to contact her.

"Overall, not much as changed. When we put together assessment and total budget required, we came up with a 3.8 per cent tax rate increase. The assessment did not increase substantially," explained Hunter.

After Hunter's final comments, Mayor Burton called for the motion and council approved the creation of a bylaw showing a 3.8 per cent tax hike that will come before council on Feb. 8 for final approval.

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HE construction values top \$42 million in 2021

CHRIS DROST

Staff Reporter

2021 will go down as a record-breaking year when it comes to construction values for Highlands East.

CBO Laurie Devolin reported that the to-date construction values for 2021 came in at \$42,739,713, a huge jump from the \$12,012,040 in 2020 during the Highlands East council regular monthly meeting on Jan. 18, held virtually.

During 2021 a total of 211 building permits were issued, including 52 for dwellings, an increase over the 192 issued in 2020. One permit was issued for a secondary suite and one for a dwelling 45 to 65 square metres.

"After changing the bylaw to allow for tiny homes and secondary suites, it is nice to see a couple of our residents applying for that," Councillor Cam McKenzie said.

Additionally, 123 permits were issued for sewage systems and 25 Occupancy Certificates were issued, an increase by seven over the previous year. The total number of building inspections for December were 42, and

septic inspections, five.

The planning department has had a busy year with 92 Zoning Compliance requests, 14 more than in 2020.

Fire chief Chris Baughman reported that there were 22 calls for service in December bringing the total for 2021 to 258, down from the 324 in 2020, but not too far off from years prior.

Due to the high transmission rate of the Omicron variant and the risk of losing a large portion of responders, if there was an exposure, Baughman made the decision to cancel all in-person training until Jan. 26. Online training is continuing.

With property supervisor Jim Alden's absence, CAO/treasurer Shannon Hunter, presented the report on property and facilities. Due to the Omicron variant, all recreational facilities in the township are currently closed. According to Hunter, staff have been busy doing deep-cleaning and disinfecting the facilities to ensure safety for the users when things can reopen.

Staff have also been busy preparing the tender packages for the Cardiff Pool change room construction. It is

see HE page 5

HE departments share their budgets

from page 4

expected that the packages will be ready within a week for publication.

Council approved the 2021/2022 water and sewer rates for ward one as set out in the financial plan.

Operations supervisor, Brett Charboneau gave an update on the plowing situation after the major snowfall on Jan. 17.

"I think we caught up with all our snow in one day," he said to council. Public works has added a small sanding unit that will help with parking lots. "Well done to get a small sander in the back of the pick-up. You guys do an amazing job," commented Councillor Cam McKenzie.

Last week, three new employees received training in snow plowing.

In response to the request from the Buckhorn Snowmobile Club to move the trail crossing in Gooderham, Charboneau confirmed that public works has no issues or concerns with it.

"Have you contacted adjacent landowners where they trail will be changed," asked Councillor McKenzie. Charboneau informed council that this has not been done although there are a number of homes in the area.

Council approved a recommendation to enter into an agreement with Buckham Transport for household hazardous waste collection. Six vendors had registered for the bid but three did not proceed and Drain-All Ltd. did not complete a bid as they did not have the capacity in 2022 to handle additional events. Two vendors submitted bids, Brendar Environmental and Buckham Transport. The bids were

reviewed and scored by representatives from the four municipalities with Buckham being selected because of its environmental practices, previous experience operating municipal drop-off sites, its lower labour, transportation and processing costs.

Under the finance report, Hunter explained that a RFP had been sent out in December for proponents to bid on developing an asset management plan. There were two responses, with the contract being awarded to Public Service Digest Citywide Inc. at a cost of \$87,100. Much of this had been set aside in reserves.

"We will get the plan, software and training to implement it and meet new regulations," explained Hunter.

The township office is currently closed to the public and anyone who can work from home is doing so, Hunter told council.

"Staff have been phenomenal," she said. They have managed to keep people separated and keep services going. She offered accolades to all the staff.

"We are hitting the ground running," she added. Weekly meetings are still being held online, work is continuing on election planning and preparing for tax billing.

Council appointed Councillor Suzanne Partridge as its representative on Haliburton's new Community Action Plan Advisory Group.

Finally, the use of corporate resources such as logos and municipal emails during elections, was reviewed by Hunter. She said little had changed over previous years but the full policy will be posted on the municipal website.

Stay off closed snowmobile trails



residents and visitors to be patient and stay off local Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) trails that remain closed.

Riders who choose to ignore the closed trail signs or attempt to go around closed gates are placing themselves, club volunteers and the local OFSC club at risk. Riding these trails before they are opened can cause damage to private property and may result in loss of riding opportunities in the area.

Members OPP will be out this week conducting enforcement and charging riders who choose to ignore these rules. Please check to ensure trails are available and passable with the OFSC website, www.ofsc.on.ca/trail-maps/. More information is also available through the HCSA website at hcsa.ca.

"Riding on unavailable trails sets us back in the preparation process. We are concerned about on trail hazards, such

as rocks and logs and you may be trespassing. A snowmobile trail requires a safety audit, which involves checking signage and potential hazards before it can open safely," president of the Haliburton County Snowmobile Association John Enright said. "Most trails here are on private property. All gates and barriers are closed for a reason. Please let your local club make arrangements to open any gate. A snowmobile trail is an un-engineered product, which changes rapidly and frequently due to terrain, weather, and club grooming cycles. Be aware, ride safely."

Submitted



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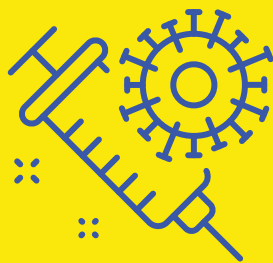
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points of view



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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

Maintain perspective

SEEING THE snow-covered driveway reduced in size from its uncovered state seen the rest of the year after the past few snowfalls made me think of how much our worlds have diminished.

This has occurred from the rise of divorces, separation from loved ones such as grandparents in hopes of reducing the transmission of COVID-19 and the isolation we have all experienced in not being able to gather in large social settings – albeit with a period of time when we did with the COVID-19 protocols we're all accustomed to when at indoor gatherings.

Our memories are enriched by experiencing things with others. They take on greater depth when it is shared. Does it even matter to anyone but you, if you don't have the opportunity to share it?

The question about what you'll take with you to a deserted island is already a lost cause because it's generally accepted any prolonged time isolated leaves a person just wanting another person.

Yes, there are people, who are perfectly content to be on their own, but for most people even one person can provide a break from one's own solitude once in a while.

There's no denying that COVID-19 is not something to take lightly by anyone, particularly the immunocompromised and elderly people. We must take precautions for them. Vaccinations are vital to getting back to where we want to be. It's worked for past diseases such as Polio. They may not be 100 per cent, but nothing is. Omicron is still with us, but vaccines can help reduce hospitalization. The latest variant is not to be taken lightly. The amount of people in ICUs is proof of that.

There's a certainty that people are coming together on their own to

regain the social connections lost to the early part of the pandemic when vaccines were not available and so little was known about transmission of the novel coronavirus. Vaccinations doesn't make anyone invulnerable against contracting or preventing transmission, but it has helped with preventing hospitalizations. There is a balance between the risk of contracting COVID-19 and to not satisfy the social need to connect. We all must make our own decisions when seeing people.

Get vaccinated, wear your masks when required and we'll all be able to accept a level of risk to share the space and love of others.

This effort isn't just for those other people, but our neighbours; our friends' mothers, sisters, daughters, grandfathers, fathers, brothers and cousins.

There is great value of having in-person interactions. I know my father always takes on an improved disposition once I've seen him for a couple of days.

At 85, he's lost all his

friends, who have died to sickness or old age. I'm close to half his age and know the challenges of finding friends, I can't imagine what it's like at his age. It's the impermanence of the shared moments that have been noticeable most during this pandemic.

The driveway with its ever encroaching snowbanks threatening to completely consume the path to the garage without a regular effort is a metaphor of our lives in the pandemic. During the winter it seems like an endless struggle. However, keeping the perspective that it's important to remember winter will end and so will the pandemic. We just need to keep the effort going and our path to home will be clear in time.



darren lum

Editorial



Shadow casts at Skyline

by Darren Lum

Wish you were here

MONIKA WAS fed-up. Fed-up with winter: the cold, the snow and everything else that went with it. She had been struggling to get into her walking clothes when she realized the snowpants were not going to do up. How could they have shrunk? she asked herself. They were fine before Christmas. But then she thought about the shortbread, mince tarts and sugar cookies, not to mention eggnog and Christmas cake. There's the answer, she thought ruefully.

Going outside had become a chore, what with all the clothing, icy roads and a wind that sometimes felt as though it was trying to scrape the skin right off her face. Birds clustered around the feeders, their feathers fluffed out so they looked like small puff balls. The deer, ever present, picked their delicate way around her snowy yard, with bodies thickly robed in winter fur. The cold didn't seem to bother them. Oh, how Monika wished the same was true for her.

She understood why many of her friends chose to go south this time of year. To walk around the house in bare feet – never mind doing so outside as well – would be such a treat. Monika remembered the gentle breezes rustling palm trees, the feel of sun on skin while ocean waves fingered the sand and pelicans dove into the surf. Sand between bare toes, warm and strangely comforting as if to say 'It's OK to be undressed, enjoy it while you can.'

No bare toes here, she thought looking out at last night's snowfall. No lazy day trying to decide whether to swim in the ocean or sit on the side of the pool making little waves with her legs in the turquoise water.

People who are supposed to know such things say going to a warmer climate during the winter could add

years to a person's life. Well that's because people stuck in the cold don't want to extend their existence anyway, Monika told who-ever would listen to her complaints. And people did. They even agreed with her that life would be better if it wasn't so cold for so long. They would all sit around their wood stoves, drinking hot toddies or whatever else they liked, feet up and complaints flying.

But Monika found she could only take so much of the negative comparisons, the moaning and groaning about winter months. That was usually when she decided to throw on another sweater and get on with her life.

Jim had just arrived on her doorstep offering his services with the snowblower. That was a pleasant surprise, though not the first time. The sun was out. While not a hazy, lazy globe of heat, it sparkled on the snow-laden tree

limbs like a million diamonds waiting to be plucked. And above, the sky was a pure, clear blue. Monika found it pretty hard to feel grumpy and discouraged looking at such a sky.

The news told there was talk of possible war in Europe. She had heard from friends down south who had witnessed recklessly careless behaviour. Weather events seemed to be happening every day around the globe. And here in Monika's world, the sun shone and trees sparkled. Neighbours helped each other. Her freezer was full, the firewood neatly piled and waiting and she still had two strong legs for walking.

So after thanking Jim, she left her snowpants undone under her heavy coat and made sure the metal grippers on her boots were secure. Then calling to the dog, the two of them headed out into the sunshine. Life could be a lot worse.

Down



sharon lynch

Our road

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points of view

Shocking behaviour

IF THERE IS one good thing about being forced to stay inside on a frigid winter night, it has to be the entertainment that the household environment provides. I'm not talking about binge-watching shows on Netflix or some other streaming service, nor indulging in social media, or getting immersed in a hobby, or even reading a really good book. Those things are all great, but nothing they offer is half as entertaining as learning to harness the power of static electricity. As pastimes go, this is highly under-rated.

Call me old fashioned, but I still take great satisfaction in knowing that even the worst boredom can be quickly alleviated by the simple act of rubbing my wool socks vigorously against a carpet and then sneaking up behind Jenn or one of the pets in order to jumpstart their hearts.

This just never grows old.

If you ask me, humanity's understanding of science could have stopped right here. I mean who would have thought the accumulation of excess electrons could bring so much happiness? Believe me, had I known this when I was a kid, I would have paid far more attention in school.



steve
galea

Loon Tales

Winter is also the only time of the year when I can enjoy the look of my dog Rosie after she has been possessed by a sufficient amount of static electricity. Believe me, if you have never seen a springer spaniel with a mohawk, you are missing out on one of life's great pleasures.

This is Rosie's second winter, so she is still learning the ropes when it comes to how static electricity works. But I think she is starting to get the hang of it, judging by the way she gingerly tiptoes off her dog bed and around the house.

On the downside, she is also starting to get suspicious of me any time I sneak up on her. Then again, so are Jenn and the cats.

Speaking of which, is it just me or does everyone think there is something really fun about using static to attach a balloon to a sleeping cat?

That, and the surprised look on their faces when they pop the balloons, is almost reason enough for getting the second cat, if you ask me. And when you get to watch two cats walk around with their hair so straight up that they appear to be posing for a Halloween calendar, well, that's icing on the cake.

Harnessing the power of static electricity can be good for your ego too. One of my favourite things to do is give Jenn a quick and unexpected kiss on the cheek right after I have built up a sufficient amount of static electricity, just so she knows there is still a spark between us. Honestly, I think we both get a charge out of that, although in very different ways. Also, I enjoy the shocking language this induces.

The simple joy these things bring makes you wonder what people did before static electricity or balloons were invented?

Having said all this, I think it is also fair to say that not everyone appreciates static electricity in the way I do. Perhaps because it is one of those things that it is better to give than to receive.

Jenn understands this. And sometimes it makes her very negative.



pic of the past

The past snowstorms got Kate Butler of the Haliburton Highlands Museum thinking about "the people (and horses!) who used to work in the local lumbercamps - they were out and about in all kinds of winter weather! It's no wonder that hot tea was a favourite little luxury in the camps! Submitted by Kate Butler, Haliburton Highlands Museum. Reprinted with permission from the Museum Twitter page.

Thank you West G.

To the Editor,

The West G Pizza & Grill has sold. I just wanted to thank Becky for her kindness and generosity so often things go unsaid. Becky and her staff hosted community Christmas dinners with all the finings, two seatings, Santa and gifts for the kids. She also supplied two pizzas for the cancer support group

that meet once a month at Abby Gardens at no cost. She is truly a great community spirit.

Thank you.

Cathy Mcilmurray
West Guilford

We all need a boost, seniors especially

"Give me a boost!"

As a young child, you may have made this request to an older sibling or parent at some point -maybe for help to reach something or gain a better view. As an older adult, the phrase 'give me a boost' also has merit during COVID-19.

In the first 19 days of the New Year, there have been seven deaths from COVID-19 in Northumberland County, Haliburton County and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Six of these individuals were 65 years of age and older. Only one of these six individuals had received a booster dose (some were unvaccinated).

A booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine greatly improves protection against the Omicron variant compared to just two doses (or one or none). Boosters reduce your risk of serious illness from Omicron and lessen the chance you will end up in hospital or the ICU. If you are 65 years of age or older, you're more vulnerable to COVID-19, so an extra dose of protection is needed now!

While the uptake of COVID-19 booster doses has been strong, interest is starting to level off.

This is worrisome and requires a call to

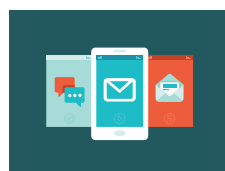
arms. If you are a senior with only two doses, please get your third. If you have an older family member or loved one who is not fully protected, encourage and support them to get a booster dose.

Vaccines remain the best way to slow the spread of Omicron and ease the pressure on the health care system.

To make getting a COVID-19 vaccine easier, anyone 50 years and older who needs a first, second or booster dose can now walk into any Health Unit vaccination clinic between 1 pm and 4:30 pm. You can also continue to book an appointment online (www.ontario.ca/book-vaccine) or by phone at 1-833-943-3900. For clinic dates and locations, rides to a clinic site and other information, visit www.hkpr.on.ca or call 1-866-888-4577, ext. 5020.

Give a boost to reducing the impact of Omicron. Stop by a COVID-19 vaccination clinic and, like you may have said as a youngster, 'give me a boost!'

By Dr. Natalie Bocking,
Medical Officer of Health
HKPR District Health Unit



Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
darren@haliburtonpress.com

Frigid temps grip area

Haliburton resident Maie Arike's eyes are the only thing visible while walking to the dentist's office for a morning appointment along York Street on Friday, Jan. 21 in Haliburton.



Morning commuters at York Street and Maple Avenue make their way to their respective destinations, as smoke was emitted from buildings and vehicles showing the how frigid it was on Friday, Jan. 21 in Haliburton. Along with snowstorms, the Highlands experienced frigid temperatures last week, including a few nights when temperatures hit negative 28 Celsius degrees./DARREN LUM Staff

COVID-19 outbreak declared at Community Living home

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

An outbreak has been declared at a community home in Haliburton.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District health unit reported the outbreak at the Community Living facility on Mountain Street on Jan. 18.

"One person supported and four staff have tested positive, happily with mild symptoms or none at all," said Teresa Jordan, executive director of Community Living Trent Highlands. "The health unit has been very supportive and we continue to take our guidance from them. All extra measures of infection control are in place and the team is tremendously dedicated to ensuring that all that

can be done to make the days better in isolation is being creatively done."

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, 121 COVID-19 outbreaks have been declared in the HKPRD health unit region – 70 in Northumberland County, 43 in City of Kawartha Lakes and eight in Haliburton County. Of those 121 outbreaks, 47 were declared in long-term care homes; 25 were declared in congregate settings including group homes, shelters and correctional facilities; 16 were declared in schools; 13 were declared in workplaces or other community settings; five were declared in hospitals and two were declared in child care facilities.

The outbreak is the first for Community Living in Haliburton County and is the first local outbreak reported since prior to Christmas.

"While this is our first outbreak in Hal-

iburton, as an agency we have experience and the entire agency rallies to support the teams that are facing the extra work and worry of outbreak," Jordan said.

Provincial guidance currently requires that a COVID-19 outbreak be declared in a congregate setting when two or more linked confirmed cases occur within a 14-day period, where at least one case could have reasonably acquired their infection in the congregate setting. Dr. Natalie Bocking, HKPRD medical officer of health said the health unit is working closely with the facility to manage and control the outbreak, ensuring that staff and residents are protected against COVID-19. Outbreak measures include: regular testing of staff and residents, isolating/cohorting of residents, active screening for COVID-19 symptoms, limiting or restricting communal activities, putting in place visitor restrictions, limiting/restricting new admissions and limiting/restricting client absences, as well as routine COVID-19 prevention measures such as mask use, physical distancing, vaccination, PPE use and regular cleaning/disinfecting.

"Omicron is spread very easily, and settings where large numbers of people live or gather can be at greater risk of seeing transmission," Bocking told

the *Echo*. "This is why, during the latest surge in COVID-19 cases, the health unit is no longer declaring outbreaks in community settings, but is continuing to do so for high-risk congregate settings such as long-term care homes, retirement homes, shelters, group homes, hospitals and other settings where there is a risk of ongoing exposure. These facilities are doing all they can to prevent COVID-19 spread and to protect the health of residents and staff, and the health unit is here to assist in any way before, during and after an outbreak."

Jordan thanked the Haliburton community for support throughout the pandemic.

"We have had many experiences where community members have offered encouragement and thanks to the staff for their essential work throughout this time," she said. "At this time with no serious illness there are no immediate needs, but certainly positive thoughts for a speedy resolve would be most welcome."

An outbreak is declared over when there are no new COVID-19 cases in clients or staff after 14 days from the latest of the date of isolation of the last client case, or date of illness onset of the last client case, or date of last shift at work for last staff case.



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Request for public's assistance

The Haliburton Highlands Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police is currently investigating a possible altercation between several males in Haliburton.

Police received information that during the early evening on Tuesday, Jan. 18, an altercation took place between several males on the pathway, which runs along Head Lake, in the area along Highland Street, between the downtown core and Gelert Road in Haliburton. There are no

concerns for public safety at this time.

Investigators are asking anyone with information to call Haliburton Highlands OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or 705-286-1431. Should you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or www.khcrimestoppers.com, where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward.

Submitted



Radio Bingo rewards Red Wolves

Proceeds from Canoe FM's weekly Radio Bingo nights are supporting another local group in town - the Haliburton County Red Wolves. Canoe FM's Ron Murphy, from left and its station manager Roxanne Casey presented a cheque for \$2,500 to Yvette Brauer and Tracey Pratt co-ordinators of the Red Wolves team. /NICK BERNARD Staff

MOH recommending boosters, especially for seniors

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

The following are brief reports from a Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge district health unit press conference with medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking, held virtually on Jan. 19 and press releases from the public health unit.

Balancing COVID-19 and isolation risks

The health unit has issued revised, interim guidance on when residents of area long-term care and retirement homes need to isolate in a COVID-19 outbreak.

"This comes amid rising concerns about the increased risk to the physical and mental health of residents who have been placed in isolation if their long-term care facility or retirement home has been declared in outbreak," reads a press release issued Jan. 19.

While public health units follow provincial guidance for case, contact and outbreak management of COVID-19, there is some discretion to adapt these to unique situations in their local regions, reads the press release. The interim health unit guidance includes directions for facilities with cases identified only among staff, as well as updated recommendations on testing and isolation for residents at homes with suspect outbreaks. The change could allow residents to be released from isolation sooner if certain requirements are met. "These changes are meant to strike a balance between the negative impacts of strict outbreak measures, like isolation, and the continuing need to protect older residents from COVID-19," said Bocking. "COVID-19 has changed from the first wave, meaning we also need to change our response. At this point in the pandemic, most residents of long-term care and retirement homes are highly vaccinated. We're also seeing less illness and transmission of COVID-19 in these facilities. While there is an obligation to protect those most vulnerable to the virus, we know that strict isolation measures can also negatively affect residents."

Reaching a peak looks promising

"Are we starting to peak, is this starting to level off in terms of activity with this wave of Omicron?" said Bocking. "I do think it's too early to say for our region. A couple of things that are looking promising ... our test positivity has come down, which I think is one of the indicators that we can look at. The number of outbreaks that are being newly declared each day has slowed. We were at several days where we were seeing several outbreaks

being declared and this seems to be slowing a little bit. I think we can also look to neighbouring jurisdictions and what's happening in other areas of the province."

Bocking said the HKPRD region is about a week behind neighbouring jurisdictions.

"As a more rural region, it takes a little bit longer for us to start to see wider spread of COVID-19 activity so we don't tend to peak or plateau at the same time as some of these other jurisdictions. But we know as we watch their trends that we will be following soon as well."

Bocking said there were promising indicators that suggested we were reaching a peak in the fifth wave, noting that modelling had predicted that by the end of January that was a possibility.

"Too soon to tell for sure, but I do think we have reason to have some optimism and looking forward to coming out on the other side of this wave," she said.

By the numbers

Since the start of the pandemic, the region has confirmed 5,366 cases of COVID-19 in residents. At the time of the briefing, there were 349 lab-confirmed active cases, and the seven-day incident rate was decreased to about 254.8 cases per 100,000 people, which Bocking acknowledged was an underestimate of the broader activity level of COVID-19 infection due to a change in testing guidelines which limited general population access to PCR tests.

"I don't think we know for sure whether or not the decrease in that weekly incidence rate, how much is just an underestimate as a result of the change to PCR testing, and how much might be a reflection of starting to see a plateau," said Bocking.

The test positivity rate had decreased, and was recorded at 13.3 per cent, the highest recorded having been about 22 per cent.

In the past 14 days at the time of briefing, 1,078 cases of COVID-19 have been reported. About 19 per cent of those cases were identified in those among the 20-to-29 age group, and 16 per cent were among the 30-to-39 age group. In the past two weeks there have been 21 admissions to hospital related to COVID-19, two of those were residents of long-term care homes, 11 were among individuals that were not vaccinated - about 52 per cent - and 17 of those hospital admissions among individuals aged 70 and over.

"[There's] more severe illness resulting in hospital admission largely among older populations, certainly a risk of higher risk of several outcomes for those individuals not vaccinated, and certainly some risk with two doses of vaccine and that decreases even further with a booster dose of vaccine," said Bocking.

Five people had been admitted to ICU in the past two weeks, three of those people were unvaccinated.

Six deaths have occurred in the past two weeks, three were residents at long-term care homes. Of those deaths, three were individuals who were not vaccinated, two had had two doses of vaccine while one person who had received their booster shot. Five of the deaths were individuals aged 70 and over.

GO-VAXX bus returns

The GO-VAXX bus is once again rolling into the area but individuals who wish to be vaccinated must book their bus appointment in advance. Appointments can be booked starting at 8 a.m. the day before the mobile clinic at the website noted at the beginning of this article, or by calling 1-833-943-3900.

Clinics will run from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Three stops are scheduled for Haliburton County: Saturday, Jan. 29 - A.J. LaRue Arena, 728 Mountain Street, Haliburton, Saturday, Feb. 5, Lloyd Watson Community Centre, 2249 Loop Road, Wilberforce, Saturday, Feb. 12 - A.J. LaRue Arena, 728 Mountain Street, Haliburton.

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And many others who wish to remain anonymous



Your generosity helped us meet our goal!

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Health unit shifting the strategy for handling COVID-19

Dashboard case counts to give way to wastewater, hospital admission data

STEPHEN PETRICK

Special to the Echo

Health officials are ushering in a “paradigm shift” in how COVID-19 is managed and the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU) will have to work closely with several community groups to help them understand broad changes, said the region’s top doctor.

In a lengthy report to the health unit, medical officer of health Dr. Natalie Bocking spoke about how the Omicron variant has led to changes on how the health unit will measure the threat of the virus and actions that are being made to help schools and long-term homes operate with a sense of normalcy.

“It’s helping to not necessarily normalize COVID-19, but handle it in a way that doesn’t disrupt core activities” she said, during the Jan. 20 health board meeting, held virtually.

Bocking said that watching daily case counts on the health unit’s dashboard will no longer be the best way to get an accurate sense of how present COVID-19 is in the community. The new Omicron variant is so infectious that health care workers are now focusing their efforts on controlling the illness in high-risk settings. That means the general public has limited access to lab-confirmed testing, and dashboard numbers won’t reflect the actual numbers. Those who test positive with a home-based kit, or are showing symptoms and are assumed to have COVID are being asked to follow isolation guidelines on their own and inform close contact themselves.

Bocking said the number of hospital admissions are

now a better way to gauge the prevalence of COVID.

The health unit is also inspecting wastewater to get a sense of how prevalent COVID is in the region.

She said that technology is being used at two wastewater lines – one in Cobourg, the other in Lindsay – because when a person has COVID, they ultimately release some of its genetic material in their fluids. The technology filters water and looks for the genetic material that is consistent with COVID-19.

“We call it wastewater signal data,” Bocking said. “It’s not very specific. It does not tell us who has COVID. But it does match well with overall increase cases. When it starts to come down, cases come down as well.”

Bocking said that when hospital cases were rising, the key indicators from the wastewater were rising as well. She said, more recent data is showing that the threat may be plateauing.

There are other signs that the Omicron variant is waning. Bocking said that the test positivity rate, as of Wednesday, Jan. 19, was declining. However, the strain on hospitals is still noticeable. In the two previous weeks, there had been 21 hospital admissions in the region due to COVID.

COVID is still a concern in long-term care homes, she added, explaining that there were three deaths in the previous two weeks. However, she said that number pales in comparison to what was seen in the first wave of COVID in 2020, and now most cases being observed in long-term care homes involve residents showing mild symptoms.

“We are, on the other hand, hearing concerns about strict measures,” she said, referring to Ontario’s recent move to ban visitors to long-term care home and resident outings for social purposes.

“We’re working with our partners to talk about how we can have a balanced approach to that. This is a tricky balance, it requires a paradigm shift.”

Bocking also spoke about the need to educate parents about a shift in strategy on keeping schools open safely.

She said the health unit will no longer track each individual case of COVID at schools and inform parents when there’s a close contact in their child’s class. Instead, public health’s strategy for schools will shift to ensuring better masks are provided, better ventilation is in place and promoting vaccines for school-aged children.

“We are working closely with school boards to talk about how we can help them,” she said.

She said the constantly changing nature of public health work is leading to “burnout” and officials have to be mindful of the health of their own staff, adding that stories such as protests at public health offices have been detrimental for morale.

Bocking’s report triggered much discussion among the board, as there are still unanswered questions, such as whether a fourth vaccine dose will soon be recommended and the question of when will life get back to normal.

“There’s not one answer to that ... it will be a process,” Bocking said, addressing the question of how the pandemic might end.

She said officials need to see the impact of easing restrictions a little at a time. They can look at wastewater data, hospital admissions and daily case counts to do that.

“We don’t want to loosen everything at once and then see an increase,” she said.

Getting a handle on winter

At right, Anthony Roman takes aim with his axe while climbing up the 15-metre high manmade wall during the High on Ice offering by Yours Outdoors on Saturday, Jan. 22 at the outdoor education, Medeba just outside West Guilford. For more information about winter programming in the Highlands see www.yoursoutdoors.ca. /DARREN LUM Staff



Beginners learn to ice climb on the 15-metre high manmade wall during the High on Ice offering by Yours Outdoors.



Ontario provides a boost to public transportation

The Ontario government is providing \$641,771 to support the expansion and improvement of public transit services in the City of Kawartha Lakes and \$23,618 to support the Municipality of Dysart et al. The funding is part of the province’s Gas Tax program which will allocate \$375.6 million this year to 107 municipalities that deliver public transit.

“Our government knows that helping municipalities sustain and improve public transit systems is more important than ever during COVID-19,” said Laurie Scott, MPP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock. “That’s why we’ve topped up this year’s Gas Tax funding which can be used to extend service hours, buy transit vehicles, add routes, improve accessibility or upgrade infrastructure.”

Funding for the Gas Tax program is determined by the number of litres of gasoline sold in the province during the previous year. Municipalities that support public transit services in their community receive two cents per litre of provincial Gas Tax revenue.

To make up for reduced gas sales due to COVID-19, this year’s Gas Tax funding includes one-time additional funding of \$120.4 million to ensure municipalities can support their transit systems.

“Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how critical public transit is for frontline workers and for Ontarians who depend on these services to get to medical appointments, the grocery store and other important locations,” said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. “Gas Tax funding remains a vital source of long-term transit funding that municipalities can rely on to help operate and expand existing public transit services – ensuring people have access to safe and reliable transportation when they need it.”

Submitted by Laurie Scott’s office

Editor’s note: Dysart et al chief administrative officer Tamara Willbee said the \$23,618 will be put to the township’s DYMO bus, which “a specialized bus transportation service operated to assist those with mobility difficulties or require the assistance of a wheelchair-accessible vehicle.”



Zoe Preston, from left, is unable to slow down Connor Nickelson, as he moves the puck to the offensive zone during a hockey game on Kashagawigamog Lake on Saturday, Jan. 22. With last week's snowstorm and consistent sub-zero temperatures, the Highlands is ready for all the winter activities the area is known for offering. /DARREN LUM Staff

Cool action on Kash

Highlands residents Peter Bowers, from left, Zoe Preston and Blake Paton play ice hockey out on Kashagawigamog Lake.



Highlands resident Randy MacDonald tags a teammate to sub in to play.

The Huskies pack is back on Feb. 5

ALEX GALLACHER

Special to the Echo

The OJHL (Ontario Junior Hockey League) has announced that the season will resume Feb. 1, as the province transitions out of their modified Step Two of the Roadmap to Reopen plan.

The league, which includes the Haliburton County Huskies, has also announced that the season has been extended to accommodate the rescheduled games. The new end-date for the 2021/2022 season will be April 7, with full fan capacity set to return on March 14. Cur-

rent fan restrictions are set at 50 per cent or 500 people, whichever is less.

The Huskies, who last played on Jan. 2, will take to the ice on Feb. 4 against the Lindsay Muskies in Lindsay. Following that, they will head back to the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena less than 24-hours later to face off against the Wellington Dukes at 7:30 p.m. on Feb. 5.

"The OJHL Board of Governors were unanimously in favour of extending the OJHL regular season to allow for our players to play the full 54-game season," said OJHL Commissioner Marty Savoy in a press release. "When the provincial government announced the shutdown, our teams immediately started the process with the league of rescheduling games in an effort to have as many sched-

uled once the league resumed play."

During the off time, the Huskies have been keeping fit by working out in small groups and holding team skates on local lakes in the area, enduring the frigid conditions. Many of the players have stayed in the area, with some being called to play in the OHL (Ontario Hockey League) or play with teams in the United States.

The Huskies view this as a fresh start and are eager to get back on the ice.

"It's exciting to get back on the ice," head coach Ryan Ramsay said. "We were very nervous they were going to extend the lockdown again, but we are thankful to be back playing and the boys are chomping at the bit to get back at it."

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Haliburton Music Exchange gives the gift of music

NICK BERNARD

Staff Reporter

The Haliburton Music Exchange began with a single Facebook post, which became an idea that became one of the most rewarding experiences of Tom Oliver's life.

"Somebody was giving away a couple of kids' guitars ... and I thought, man, I wonder how many people have these instruments out there just laying around, and how many of these are just sitting in the corners of peoples' houses," Oliver said.

Like any great guitarist, Oliver himself had amassed his own collection of guitars while only playing a small handful of them – that is, three or four guitars out of a whole 20.

"Thinking to myself, like, this is what

every guitar player does – and so how many of them are sitting out there? And so it just gave me this idea: well, why don't I just see?"

The idea stayed with him and, using his professional knowledge in the e-commerce space, created the online framework that would become the Haliburton Music Exchange.

"So I started it last November, with absolutely no expectations of anything, and ... by December, by Christmas, I was already in a position where I had, I think at least 15 or 20 instruments sitting here," Oliver said. "And we did the same thing as what we did this year, blasting out a notice saying 'does anybody need some instruments out there for the kids for Christmas?'"

This past November, Oliver posted on the Music Exchange's Facebook page asking whether any children or teens might

be interested in learning how to play guitar. As always, the response was immediate and enthusiastic. Oliver was able to get nine guitars out ahead of the holidays, a repeat of the success that started the Exchange in the first place.

"The same thing happened, I put the post up, saying 'we've got full-size body guitars ... for teenagers,' and boom," he said, expressing the immediacy of the response. "And those went out the door and so now we've got a whole bunch of teenagers that are happy."

He says it's been a progression, getting people aware of what the Exchange has to offer. While, through coincidence, Oliver has seen a focus on guitars, the Music Exchange offers a number of different instruments.

"We've also been cycling through all kinds of other instruments," he said, citing the example of a girl with a physical disability who he was able to provide a trumpet for. "We'll take any instrument. We don't take full-size acoustic pianos, but we would love to get keyboards. We'll take any other type of instrument in any state of repair."

The Music Exchange takes donations either through Facebook with its page or a form on their website. From there, Oliver fixes them up, purchases whatever parts and supplies what he needs, or he uses parts from other instruments as needed.

People can also request an instrument, where they can pick it up from Oliver's home on Bolender Lane, across from Curry Chevrolet Buick GMC in Haliburton.

"I built up the website, got the functionality of everything going so that I could ... receive information from people about what was out there and what they had to drop off," Oliver explained.

He says none of what's become of the Music Exchange, which has recently partnered with the Haliburton Folk Society to produce a free eight-week guitar lesson program, would have been possible without the immediate positive response from the community.

"As soon as I started it, it just blew up. We've had just a steady stream of instruments coming in ever since."

While there were originally plans for the Haliburton Folk Society to provide financial oversight for the Music Exchange, those plans have been put on pause while the Folk Society institutes new COVID policies.

"We ... completely support the idea of providing free music lessons to youth within the county, an initiative that was started as a collaboration between Tom [Oliver] and Greg Sadlier of Camexicanus. Their program was very successful last fall and we did provide funding for it," Haliburton Folk Society president Walter Tose told the *Echo* in an email. "However we realized afterwards that we did not have policies and procedures in place for proof of vaccination, police checks, parental permission, etc. We are currently developing those and once the COVID situation permits and those policies and procedures are in place we will definitely offer financial and promotional support again for anybody who wishes to pursue such a program and can meet our requirements."

Tose reiterated that the Folk Society does still support the idea of a free music instruction program.

Looking to the future, Oliver says the focus is on developing more lesson programs, especially for the fall and winter months.

"There's various different things I have in mind for that," he said, dwelling on ideas around expanded lessons and potential grants to offer students who wish to take private lessons or attend music school. "Our focus is very specific: We want to provide free instruments and free lessons, and really that's it ... whatever results in goodness out there."

For more information on the Haliburton Music Exchange, or donate or request an instrument, visit www.haliburtonmusicexchange.com.



COUNTY OF HALIBURTON LAND DIVISION COMMITTEE NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR CONSENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Section 53(5)(a) of the Planning Act and Section 3, O.Reg. 197/96, as amended, that the following Applications for Consent have been submitted to the Haliburton County Land Division Committee, the consent granting authority in these matters.

AND FURTHER THAT An electronic meeting will be held February 14th, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. to consider these applications.

AND FURTHER THAT this meeting will be held through remote electronic participation in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended.

The media and the general public can view the Land Division Committee meeting webcast via the County of Haliburton YouTube channel which can be found on the County's website by searching the land division committee (<https://youtu.be/XsEe0YxOg6A>).

AND FURTHER THAT these Applications for Consent will be heard by the Land Division Committee:

1. File No. H-004/20 (AH)
Applicants: Barber and Ronchka
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 14, Concession 6, Geographic Township of Stanhope
Nature of the Application: Condition Change (reconveyance of Shore Road Allowance)
2. File No. H-029/21 (MH)
Applicants: Hewitt
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 3, Concession A, Geographic Township of Minden
Nature of the Application: New lot in the Village of Minden
3. File No. H-030/21 (MH)
Applicants: Bonis
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 3, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: New lot to separate two existing cottages onto separate lots
4. File No. H-031/21 (MH)
Applicants: Phillips
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 23, Concession 6, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: Lot addition to allow for a garage to be built
5. File No. H-001/22 (MH)
Applicant: Edwards
Location of the Property: Pt Lot 17, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Lutterworth
Nature of the Application: Right-of-way (lapsed Consent H-017/20)

Additional information regarding the above applications is available for public inspection electronically by request during regular business hours, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM.

If a person or public body that files an appeal of a decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent does not make written submissions to the Land Division Committee before it gives or refuses to give a provisional consent, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal may dismiss the appeal.

If you wish to be notified of the decision of the Land Division Committee in respect of the proposed consent, you must make a written request to the undersigned.

Dated at the Township of Minden Hills on January 20, 2022.

Michele Moore
Acting Secretary-Treasurer
Haliburton County Land Division Committee
11 Newcastle Street
P. O. Box 399
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Haliburton County to hire consultant for economic development strategy

STEPHEN PETRICK

Special to the Echo

Haliburton County plans to hire a consultant to work on an economic development strategy.

It's a project that would involve interviewing community members and gathering data to ensure business in the region will grow.

A report to county council by new economic development and tourism director Scott Ovell seemed to excite councillors at the Jan. 12 meeting, held virtually. Council approved the report, which asked that a request for proposal be sent out to interested consulting firms. The cost for the contract could range between \$30,000 and \$50,000.

"I'm ecstatic. This can't happen soon enough," Minden Hills Mayor Brent Devolin said.

Highlands East Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall said "this is an awesome attitude here" and asked that the work put a focus on solving the problem of a shortage of skilled labour in the area.

The RFP would ask the winning firm to have its people attend meetings with a steering committee, prepare and facilitate an online survey to collect public input and host six industry roundtables with economic development leaders.

It would also ask the consultant to "document, analyze, summarize and prepare recommendations based on input collected through the consultation process."

The firm would also be asked to meet certain "deliverables" including "creating a vision for economic development," establishing strategic priorities and drafting a five-year economic development department budget.

Ovell's report sparked discussion about the need for Haliburton County to find new ways to provide jobs and more education opportunities for its citizens, as well as better housing options.

Ovell said the point of the plan is to look at "big picture ideas" and see "what tools are in our tool box" to address business concerns, including what different groups the county can partner with.

H&R Block recognized as best in Canada

CHRIS DROST

Staff Reporter

H&R Block has a long history in Haliburton.

The Haliburton office was first opened by Betty Irvine in 1981, more than 40 years ago, in a space she rented from Vasey Insurance. The office was located below Subway in the space that Luke Schell, Haliburton Photo Service, now occupies.

Over time, as the office continued to grow, it was moved around town until finding its current location, having purchased the building from Haven and Jill Cook in August 2002.

Betty, had started first with opening an office in Bancroft more than 44 years ago and according to son Chad Irvine, the franchise in Bancroft has been in its current location for more than 30 years. Besides the Haliburton and Bancroft offices, locations started in Bobcaygeon in 1989, started in Minden in 1992 and started in Fenelon Falls in 2006.

"We have just received the award for the best growth in Canada which means serving more clients," explains Irvine. They received a congratulatory letter and a statuette for winning the The Outstanding Performance Award from H&R Block. Receiving awards is not uncommon for this franchise, according to Irvine.

"In our world, the main reason for growth is maintaining staff. Many of our staff have been with us over 30 years," Irvine said.

During tax season they have about 12 people on staff, and four during the rest of the year spread across all the locations.



Chad Irvine, owner of the local H&R Block franchise, earned national distinction by being recognized as the H&R Block with the "best growth" in the country. He has offices in Haliburton, Bancroft, Minden, Fenelon Falls and Bobcaygeon. The Haliburton location has been operating since 1981. Photo submitted by Chad Irvine

His right-hand assistant, Cindy Baumhour has been a friend since they were 10 years old.

"Our staff is like a family. We do things together like canoe trips or going down south," he says.

The vast majority of their clients are individuals, however, they do offer services for businesses as well. As tax requirements become more complicated, they do a considerable amount of trouble-shooting and following up with the

CRA for people. Irvine spends time in the various locations each week dealing with challenging cases.

"I am the clean-up man, the resource

person," he explains.

"We have a 90 per cent repeat business. I can think of people who have been coming in for 40 years," Irvine said.



Municipality of Dysart et al

135 Maple Ave., P.O. Box 389,
Haliburton, ON K0M 1S0
Telephone: (705) 457-1740
Email: info@dysartetal.ca
Website: www.dysartetal.ca

NOTICE OF COUNCIL MEETING TO CONSIDER AN APPLICATION TO PURCHASE AN ORIGINAL ALLOWANCE FOR ROAD MUNICIPALITY OF DYSART ET AL

DATE: February 22nd, 2022
TIME: Any person who wishes to address Council should contact the Planning Department for a delegation time.

LOCATION: Council Chambers, Municipal Office, 135 Maple Ave., Haliburton, Ontario.

APPLICATIONS:
The Council of the Corporation of the United Townships of Dysart et al has, by resolution, declared the following parcels of land to be surplus.

Applicant: Evans
Location: 216 Ridge View Road
Part of the Original Allowance for Road Between Lots 15 and 16, Concession 7, Geographic Township of Dysart, defined as Part 1 on a preliminary plan of survey prepared by Greg Bishop Surveying and Consulting Ltd. dated May 12, 2018.

Applicant: Warrington
Location: Part of the Original Allowance for Road Between Concessions 3 and 4, Geographic Township of Dudley, defined as Parts 1, 2 and 3 on a preliminary plan of survey prepared by P.A Miller Surveying Ltd, dated July 9, 2021.

NOTICE IS GIVEN that the Council of the Corporation of the United Townships of Dysart et al proposes to consider and if deemed appropriate enact at its meeting as noted above, a by-law to close, stop-up and convey the portion of road allowance described above.

BEFORE PASSING the said by-law, the Council of the Corporation of the United Townships of Dysart et al shall at its meeting to be held as noted above, hear in person or by his counsel, solicitor or agent, any person who claims that his land will be affected by the said by-law.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION is available for review from the Planning Department at the Municipal Office during regular offices hours (8:30 am. to 4:30 pm. Monday to Friday).

DATED at the Township of Dysart, this 25th day of January, 2022.

Jeff Iles
Director of Planning and Land Information



Municipality of Dysart et al

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NOTICE OF VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING COMMITTEE OF ADJUSTMENT

• DATE: Wednesday, February 9th 2022
• TIME: 11:00 am.
• LOCATION: The Committee of Adjustment will be held as an electronic meeting only.
The meeting will be recorded through the conferencing application and live streamed to YouTube.

APPLICATIONS:

1. D13-MV-2021-003- Gardens of Haliburton Inc

• The following variance is requested to permit a decreased parking space requirement for retirement housing staff, visitor and tenant parking on a lot located in the R3-8 zone:

a) A variance to the provisions of Section 5.4.15.8 to permit a lot in the R3-8 zone to have a minimum parking space requirement of 0.6 spaces per dwelling unit, as opposed to the minimum required 0.82 spaces per dwelling unit, granted by Minor Variance D13-MV-2018-011.

• Location: Part Lots 16 and 17, Concession 8, Part Lots 1 and 7, Lots 2 and 8, Block 2, Plan 1, Part Lot 2, Lots 3 and 4, Block 6, Plan 1, Parts 1 to 3 and 7, 19R-8809 in the geographic Township of Dysart, in the Municipality of Dysart et al, in the County of Haliburton (Sunnyside Street).

Council passed By-law 2020-69 to amends the Committee of Adjustment of the Municipality of Dysart et al's Procedural By-law to permit electronic participation in meetings. **There will not be an in-person meeting; this meeting will be conducted in an electronic format only.**

For more information about electronic meetings and public participation in an electronic meeting, contact the Secretary-Treasurer at jiles@dysartetal.ca .

ANY PERSON is entitled to attend the hearing to express his/her views about these applications or may be represented by an agent for that purpose. If you do not attend the hearing the Committee may proceed in your absence and you will not be entitled to any further notice of the proceedings. The Committee will accept oral and written submissions. **A copy of the decision will be sent to the applicant, the agent and to each person who has filed with the Secretary Treasurer a written request for notice of the decision.**

FURTHER INFORMATION: including specific information about the zone provisions affected by each application, and electronic meeting process is available from the Planning and Land Information Department at the Municipal Office by appointment only (8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Friday) or by phoning 705-457-1740.

Jeff Iles
Director of Planning and Land Information

Crossword brought to you by

Ken Barry
Broker
705-754-5280
ken@kenbarry.com

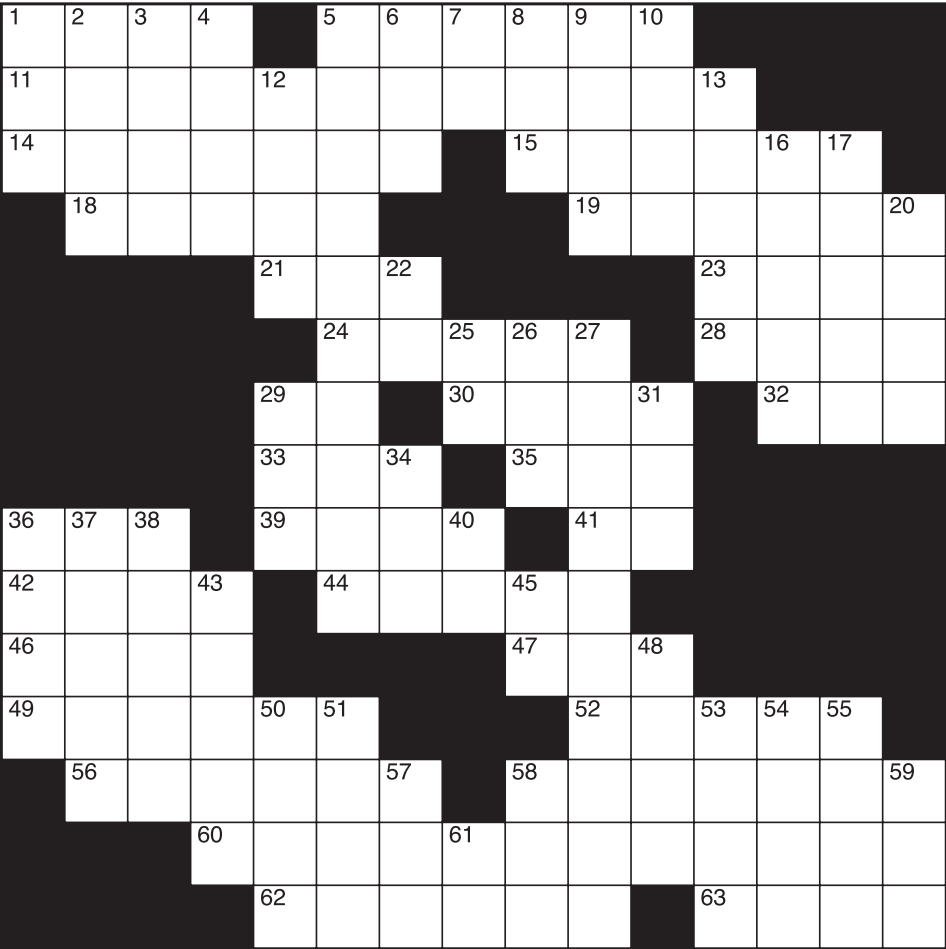
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- CLUES ACROSS

 - 1. Constrictors
 - 5. Abounding in rocks
 - 11. Speed
 - 14. German city
 - 15. Lacking sympathy
 - 18. Visionaries
 - 19. Wastes away
 - 21. One precursor to the EU
 - 23. Nursemaid
 - 24. Unconsciousnesses
 - 28. Baby's word for father
 - 29. Equal to 64 US pints (abbr.)
 - 30. Senses of self-importance
 - 32. Midway between south and south-west
 - 33. When you hope to get there
 - 35. Electronic data processing
 - 36. Passports and drivers' licences are two
 - 39. Fishes
 - 41. Air Force
 - 42. Personal computers
 - 44. Ecological community
 - 46. Wings
 - 47. Halfway
 - 49. Cool, calm and collected
 - 52. Jewelled headdress
 - 56. Musical composition
 - 58. ___ Falls
 - 60. Repeating remarks
 - 62. Periods in one's life
 - 63. Hyphen

CLUES DOWN

 - 1. ___ Humbug!
 - 2. Devices that alert pilots (abbr.)
 - 3. Grocer
- 4. One point east of southeast
 - 5. Subjects to hostility
 - 6. Work unit
 - 7. Atomic #56
 - 8. British thermal unit
 - 9. "Elusive Butterfly" singer
 - 10. Fastened over animal's neck
 - 12. Device
 - 13. Rechargeable power source
 - 16. Ancient sage
 - 17. Consist of two elements
 - 20. "Pygmalion" writer
 - 22. "The Centennial State" (abbr.)
 - 25. Of I
 - 26. Get older
 - 27. Brotherhoods
 - 29. Buzzing insect
 - 31. Sunscreen rating
 - 34. Brew
 - 36. Leader
 - 37. Indigo bush
 - 38. Burn with a hot liquid
 - 40. Junior's dad
 - 43. Horse mackerels genus
 - 45. Morning
 - 48. Unit of linear measurement (abbr.)
 - 50. Double curve
 - 51. Small, twisted bunch
 - 53. Developed
 - 54. Mars crater
 - 55. Humanistic discipline
 - 57. Word element meaning ear
 - 58. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series
 - 59. Wood residue
 - 61. It cools your home

Answers on page 17

It's worth the wait

community news
west guilford
Eleanor Cooper
754-2278

Many of us are learning the practice of waiting. Doesn't it seem like a long time since last spring? Right now in the midst of the cold and snow, spring seems far away but we know it will come.

Those bulbs planted in the fall are there, waiting. We know bulbs will become flowers.

A date is made to meet someone and that, too, seems far away, but we know it will come. It seems that the future, whether it be sunnier weather, blooms

from the earth, a dear one's appearance, even health following illness becomes more appealing in the impatient now. Workers simply doing their duty sometimes under duress or difficulty long for the end of the day, or need to rest, but right now the waiting is hard. Musicians and theatrical folk wait for opening night. Builders from architects to brick-layers and carpenters wait while the houses or towers grow become realized what was just an idea in the mind.

All of the above spend the time of waiting either impatiently, longingly or resignedly. Reward when the waiting is over are welcome indeed. Spring does happen. Bulbs burst forth. That person does appear. The patient does recover. The show does go on. The house of dreams becomes reality. Waiting eventually is over and brings its due reward.

Worth the waiting? Always, yes!

EH welcomes political economist Gordon Laxer for webinar



Political economist, professor emeritus at the University of Alberta, and the founding director of the Parkland Institute Gordon Laxer is the key speaker of an upcoming Environment Haliburton webinar this week. Register for the webinar at www.environmenthaliburton.org/ Submitted by Gordon Laxer

Please join political economist Gordon Laxer in a webinar on his new report exposing the disturbing power and influence of multi-national foreign oil corporations on Canadian climate and energy policy, Thursday, Jan. 27 at 7:30 pm.

Published by the Council of Canadians and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the report Posing as Canadian: How Big Foreign Oil Captures Canadian Energy and Climate Policy reveals how foreign fossil fuel interests influence Canadian governments.

"People may be surprised and intrigued to learn that all major oil corporations operating in Canada are fully or majority foreign-owned," Laxer said. "Yet they wave the maple leaf flag, meddle in Canadian politics and perpetually lobby the federal and Alberta governments. In a healthy democracy, the voters, not foreign-influenced corporations, shape the policies enacted in their name."

The event is jointly hosted by Environment Haliburton! (EH!), Climate Action Muskoka (CAM) and Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN!).

The report found that foreign-owned corporations fund about 97 per cent of the revenue of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) - the apex oil and gas lobby group in Canada. A 2018 law bans foreign entities from meddling in Canadian elections. But, if corporations list their headquarters in Canada, they can register as third-party advertis-

ers for elections. Executives of foreign-owned oil corporations have made sizeable contributions to political parties and politicians who favour their agenda. The report recommends closing the loophole.

"Climate impacts now occur across Canada. Oil and gas production is the largest source of carbon pollution here, but still governments drag their feet on policies to transition off fossil fuels. Now we know why," CAM co-founder, Sue McKenzie said. "Canadians want to be listened to and want a 'made in Canada' climate policy, not one influenced by foreign fossil fuel interests."

Laxer is a political economist, professor emeritus at the University of Alberta, and the founding Director of Parkland Institute. He is the author of two award-winning books *After the Sands: Energy and Ecological Security for Canadians*, and *Open for Business: The Roots of Foreign Ownership in Canada* and the editor of several others. He has published over 40 journal articles, refereed book chapters, and research reports. His op-eds have been published widely in Canadian outlets and he has also been a regular guest on current affairs radio and television programs.

Register for the webinar at www.environmenthaliburton.org/

The report can be found here: www.gordonlaxer.com.

Submitted

Three years in – Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts

CHRIS DROST

Staff Reporter

It has been just over three years since municipal councils began their current term of office. With the next municipal election now less than a year away, we have reached out to invite local political representatives to answer a few questions about their background and how it has helped them in their role, what they see as their greatest success so far, the most difficult challenge, and what they would like to accomplish in their community in the year ahead. Responses will be printed in the coming weeks in the order received by email or through phone interviews.

What is your cumulative time you have spent as a municipal representative for this municipality? (Is this your first term or have you served for multiple terms?)

2022 will be my 16th year on council. I was first elected in 2006 as Ward 1 councillor, ran again in 2010. Then in 2014 I ran for deputy reeve, and 2018 mayor.

What in your personal background/experience has best helped you to be an effective member of council?

I started working in restaurants as a waitress when I was in high school and then university. I only attended [for] three years but was offered a job as a manager at a jazz restaurant in Toronto and loved it. I moved up to Haliburton in 1987 and was the first manager at McK-ecks. In 1994 I joined my husband at our business which was home heating oil. Like most small business owners, I did a little bit of everything except drive the big oil trucks. I learned general bookkeeping, accounts receivable and payable, and customer service. I worked there until we sold the business in 2011.

We raised our three girls here in Haliburton. Being a working mother, a business owner and someone who was involved in the community helped me appreciate what it's like to raise a family here. I was on school councils, different boards and organizations, and have always had a desire to give back. My passion, dedication and work ethic have prepared me for this role. I also like to keep things light when I can. We are doing important work but having a sense of humour helps to keep things in perspective.

Three years in to this mandate, what do you believe has been this council's greatest achievement so far?

After three years I would say our greatest achievement is that we have adopted tools and are working towards sustainability. Gone are the days that municipalities can plan a couple of years out, or make knee-jerk reactions and decisions. We need to be planning much further into the future so that as our infrastructure ages, we are in a good position to maintain or replace [what's needed]. Our asset management plan and relying on the DOT software are two examples of this. There are several other things as well. The Welcome Centre was a fantastic addition the Head Lake Park. Our agreement with Fleming College to gift land



Dysart et al township Mayor Andrea Roberts, who has been on council for 16 years, recognizes the challenges facing the community now including the pandemic and the shortage of affordable housing. She believes in the community and is working towards finalizing plans for the college residence, a new Haliburton Highlands Nordic Trail & Ski Club Association garage and club house in Glebe Park, and rezoning land for housing projects. /FILE DARREN LUM Staff

for a student residence is moving ahead.

Is there anything council has made a decision in in the past three years that you wish you could have a chance to re-do?

I'm not saying we haven't made mistakes but I can't think of anything that I would want to re-do. We have all done our best with the information we had at the time. We have great staff to lean on for their expertise and advice, then it's council's job to give direction and make decisions.

What is this council's greatest challenge in the year ahead?

We still have to finalize our budget for 2022 and I think there will be a lot of debate on that. Continuing to work while COVID-19 is affecting our community so greatly. Seeing our restaurants closed again, our arena shut down, and hearing stories of business suffering is

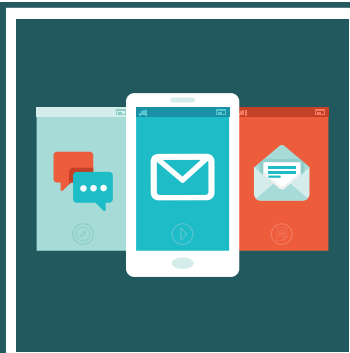
so hard. The housing crisis is only getting worse and finding affordable housing is becoming increasingly impossible. The strain this is putting on all health care workers, teachers, everyone really is draining. Staying positive and hopeful for our future is taking its toll. We are a resilient, caring community so I do feel we will eventually get through this.

What do you hope this council can achieve in its last months in office?

I'm hoping to see plans finalized for the Fleming College residence, a new ski club garage and club house in Glebe Park, and the rezoning of lands for some housing projects that are in the works. We will also be undertaking our first strategic plan in the new year. I'm excited for this, it will be a guiding document for the future. Just because there is an election in October, we need to stay focused and continue to work hard.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

H	S	A	D		S	H	C	O	P	E		
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Have a thought, comment or opinion
you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
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Thank You for Believing

\$243,910

was raised to fund identified priority capital equipment for our hospital and health care facilities - including mobile Workstations-on-Wheels for the new Clinical Information System, and state-of-the-art Nurse Call Bell systems for Highland Wood and Hyland Crest Long Term Care Homes. And it contributed to critical Community Support Services programs, providing an additional 993 meals for those in need through our Meals on Wheels program, and 282 trips for medically-required transportation.

Thank you to so many generous individuals, groups, and businesses, including:

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650 OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of
Bryan Russel Allen (1946-2022)
Passed away peacefully at Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay, January 14, 2022 at the age of 75.



Predeceased by his father James, mother Etheline and brother Gary. Survived by his wife Marilyn Harvey, daughter Lori Allen-Kwapich, brothers Jim and Bill, sisters Debbie and Sharon, grandchildren Lucas and Kayla Kwapich, and step children Laura, Ron, Ken (Joanne) and their children. Bryan was a retired CN Rail employee with over 30 + years of service, an avid outdoorsman and an old car enthusiast, who loved spending time with family and friends, always willing to lend a helping hand. Many thanks to Nurses Gail, Brandi, Val, Susan and Carrie as well as Dr. Unligil and any other staff in ICU for the utmost care, compassion and kindness they showed Bryan and his family during his final days. Cremation has taken place, a celebration of life to be held at a later date. In Bryans honor, donations to the Canadian Cancer Society would be greatly appreciated. To leave an on-line condolence, make a memorial donation or to share a story or photo please visit: www.jardinefuneralhome.com
"Your life was a blessing, your memory a treasure, you are loved beyond words and missed beyond measure, till we meet again"

In Loving Memory of
Arlene Thomson
In loving memory of our Mother, Nanna, and Great Gramma who left us January 15, 2022.




Sadly missed along life's way
Quietly remembered everyday
No longer in our life to share
But in our hearts she's always there.

Predeceased by husband Douglas Thomson. Lovingly remembered by daughters Dale (Roy), Karen (Danielle), and Shelley (Luke), by 7 grandchildren, by 8 great grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild. Dear sister of Marilyn O'Connor.

A private family interment will be held at a later date.

Memorial Donations to the Haliburton Highland Health Services Foundation (H.H.H.S.F) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0. www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com



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The Haliburton County

ECHO

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Tuesday, February 8, 2011



A wintry 'pick' me up

Haliburton County resident Paul Heaven wields his ice axe during his turn up the ice wall at Medeba. See more photos on page 15. **Darren Lum** Echo staff

Family elated at first NHL goal

Darren Lum
Staff reporter

You never forget the first.
Cody Hodgson scored his first NHL goal in his second game with the Vancouver Canucks against the Phoenix Coyotes while on the road

on Wednesday night, Feb. 2.

It was a long time coming for Hodgson who has had various injuries since being drafted more than two years ago in the first round by the Canucks.

The Haliburton cottager fielded questions from the media about his first goal.

"It's pretty special to just play in the National Hockey League and to get a goal is a huge honour. What a privilege it is to play here," he said.

"It's a pretty incredible feeling. It's tough to describe. It's something you work your

see **HODGSON'S** page 3



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WENONA LAKE ROAD \$799,000



Looking for privacy in a large, spacious home on a year-round road, close to Haliburton Village? Stop looking! This amazing 4+bed/3 bath home on 50+ acres has everything you need. Warm wood finishes welcome you into a large eat-in kitchen, highlighted with the character and charm of an antique wood cookstove. Pantry for added storage. Two living rooms provide space for the whole family. A large garage with commercial size door offers amazing opportunities for the mechanically inclined. Hardwood forest with pretty trails for outdoor adventures. Enjoy more of the outdoors with Wenona Lake boat launch minutes away.

UNICORN ROAD \$549,000



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KAWAGAMA LAKE \$279,000



Stunning south views across the lake. This property has a fantastic shoreline of mixed sand/gravel gradual entry to the water. Hydro is at the lot line and there is good cell service. This is easily accessible from either marina on the lake. Enjoy this affordable lot in the summer while you make your plans for your new cottage. Great fishing year-round and fantastic snowmobiling in the winter.

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